

SUMMER 2015 Alumni Columns

Northwestern State University Magazine

Award-winning
veteran reporter
Gary Fields
reflects on advice he
would give himself





*Dr. Jim Henderson
1994
President
Northwestern State
University*

Dear Alumni,

Northwestern's alumni consortium, which is more important to the university than ever in this challenging fiscal environment for higher education, was expanded by 1,562 graduates over the past academic year.

There were 752 graduates during the spring commencement program in May, and more than 70 alumni that received degrees in 1965 were also honored at that event as 50-year graduates.

It is noteworthy that the graduation ceremonies were highlighted both by the recognition of hundreds of new alumni that will represent their alma mater in the decades ahead in every area of society and of graduates that have enhanced the university's reputation for a half-century through their diverse achievements.

The loyalty of alumni that has fortified Northwestern throughout its history was reflected in the year-end graduation program. Gary Fields of the Wall Street Journal, a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist, stated in his commencement address that his degree from Northwestern prepared him as well as an education from any university in America to excel in his profession.

One of our goals is to intensify the relationship between Northwestern and its alumni. In a recent survey of alumni that generated hundreds of responses, the allegiance of NSU graduates to their alma mater was obvious and encouraging.

Dr. Larry Holly, a celebrated physician who was among the 50-year graduates, presented the university one of the largest gifts in its history to create a distinguished professorship and endowed scholarships.

More than 96 percent of alumni expressed positive overall sentiments for Northwestern, and more than 94 percent stated that the university had an important impact on their lives and careers.

That sense of loyalty provides a solid foundation upon which to build a stronger alliance between Northwestern and its alumni that will benefit the university for years to come.

Thank you for your support. You can reach me at any time by e mail at jhenderson@nsula.edu or follow me on Twitter @ DrJBHenderson.



*Dr. Chris Maggio,
1985, 1991
Assistant Vice
President of External
Affairs for University
Advancement*

My fellow alumni,

By the time you read this we will have completed a whirlwind academic year that was capped off with our annual Golden Jubilee celebration in which we honored our 50-year graduates, including Dr. Randy Webb, who was named President Emeritus. It is just as special to me to see our alumni return for the 50th anniversary of their graduation as it is to see our new alumni collect their diplomas at commencement. This year's Golden Jubilee was made even more remarkable by a special surprise planned by

Dr. James Larry Holly to honor his wife for their golden wedding anniversary. You can read more about that on page 2.

The summer months are always busy here on campus as we host a new class of students for Freshman Connection and do our best to make a positive impression on the hundreds of prospective students attending camps, workshops and Boys and Girls State here at NSU.

Your help in promoting Northwestern State is invaluable to us and I hope you will seek ways to actively share with prospective students and their parents what a special place Northwestern State is.

I thank you for all you do to support our alma mater and I hope to see you on campus soon.

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Webb named President Emeritus, admitted to SLC Hall of Honor



Former Northwestern State University president Dr. Randall J. Webb was awarded the title of President Emeritus at the university's spring commencement ceremonies. Shown, from left, are Brenda Webb, Dr. Randall J. Webb, State Sen. Gerald Long and NSU President Dr. James Henderson.

Former Northwestern State University president Dr. Randall J. Webb was awarded the title of President Emeritus at the university's spring commencement ceremonies.

Webb retired in December after more than 18 years as president, the longest tenure of any chief executive in the university's history.

"This is the highest professional honor I have received," Webb said. "Brenda and my family share in it." Webb said many individuals were responsible for the success Northwestern achieved during his tenure as president.

"I am deeply grateful to the faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, students and their parents for all they have done to make this honor possible." He added, "I am especially grateful to President Jim Henderson for having recommended this action and to members of the Board of Supervisors of the University of Louisiana System for their approval."

Webb said Board of Supervisors members Jimmy Long, Win Sibille and Gerald "T-Boy" Hebert "were especially instrumental in making the President Emeritus designation possible, and I appreciate their support."

Current NSU president Dr. Henderson said he proposed the President Emeritus title for Webb in "recognition of his distinguished professional career and long tenure as

president of Northwestern." He said, "The entire Northwestern community is indebted to Dr. Webb for his significant contributions to the university and to higher education in Louisiana over the years."

A 1965 graduate of Northwestern in mathematics and business education, Webb earned a master of science degree in mathematics from NSU in 1966 and a doctorate in education from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1971.

Just a few days after being named President Emeritus, Webb was notified of another pending honor. He and the late Dr. Jack Doland, former head football coach and later president at McNeese State, were to be inducted as the Southland Conference Hall of Honor's Class of 2015, the league office announced. The inductions were part of the Southland's annual spring meetings and Honors Ceremony on May 19.

Doland and Webb will become the 43rd and 44th inductees to the Southland Hall of Honor since it was originated in 1999. They are also just the third and fourth presidents inducted, joining Lamar's F.L. McDonald and Stephen F. Austin's William Johnson, both first-year entrants in 1999.

There were few events in Dr. Webb's 19 years in the president's office that thrilled him more than the Demon football team's win over longtime rival Louisiana Tech last fall in the first meeting between the teams while he was in office. On his last "official" day in office, winter graduation 2014, the Demon football staff surprised him with an inscribed game ball.



Holly surprises wife with named endowments at Golden Jubilee

Northwestern State University is pleased to announce the foundation of the *Carolyn Bellue Holly Distinguished Professorship in Teaching and Learning*. This endowment was made by her husband, Dr. James Larry Holly, in loving honor of his wife and companion.

Mrs. Holly is a native of Louisiana, growing up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with a life-long desire to be a mother and a teacher. Dr. and Mrs. Holly graduated from Northwestern in 1965 where Mrs. Holly served the University as a Purple Jacket, a distinguished group of young women who were ambassadors and hostesses for the University. She was active in the Baptist Student Union and in her Christian faith. Her father visited her often at the University and developed a deep friendship with another student, Larry Holly.

After the couple married August 7, 1965, Carolyn began her teaching career in Golden Meadow Louisiana, followed by teaching experience in Waco and West, Texas and in San Antonio Texas. Fulfilling her second goal Carolyn had two children, Carrie and Richmond, each of which had four children. All of them were present for this presentation, except the oldest who is serving in the United States Army Special Forces. Even though Carolyn spent most of her life nurturing her family, her love of teaching was expressed in her seven-year experience of home schooling her children and in her mentoring many young women and her five granddaughters and three grandsons.

Dr. and Mrs. Holly have always sensed a "debt of gratitude" to the Universities they attended and it is an important part of their stewardship of the blessings which God has bestowed upon them to honor and partially repay that debt.

At the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, they have made numerous financial contributions to the school among which are:

- ▶ The Dr. and Mrs. James L. Holly Distinguished Chair of Patient-



Centered Medical Home.

- ▶ The Wirt Everett Bellue, Sr. and William Richmond Holly, Sr. Distinguished Annual Lectureship in Patient-Centered Medical Home (Mrs. Holly's and Dr. Holly's fathers)
- ▶ The Veritas Program for the mentoring of the next generations of medical students
- ▶ The President's Development Council
- ▶ The Danny Duke Annual Music and Medicine Lecture at the Center of Medical Humanities & Ethics
- ▶ The Endowment of the Primary Care Institute for promoting primary care in the United States

Dr. and Mrs. Holly have also received numerous honors at the Health Science Center including:

- The Dr. And Mrs. James L. Holly University Auditorium

- Membership on The University of Texas Chancellors Council
- Dr. Holly being named the 2012, Distinguished Alumni of the School of Medicine

While their professional foundation was formed in San Antonio, Dr. Holly chose the occasion of the 50th anniversary of their graduation from NSU and the 50th Anniversary of their marriage to honor his wife and to express their gratitude to Louisiana, to Natchitoches and to Northwestern for the foundation laid in their life by these institutions.

In addition to the Distinguished Professorship endowment, Carolyn and Larry have honored their mothers with:

- The Marie Cobb Bellue Scholarship in Teaching and Learning
- The Irene Woodruff Holly Scholarship in Health Care Education



Dr. James Larry Holly, left, surprised his wife Carolyn Bellue Holly with the creation of the Carolyn Bellue Holly Distinguished Professorship in Teaching and Learning during the May 8 Golden Jubilee for Northwestern State University graduates of 1965. In addition to the Distinguished Professorship endowment, Carolyn and Larry have honored their mothers with the Marie Cobb Bellue Scholarship in Teaching and Learning and the Irene Woodruff Holly Scholarship in Health Care Education. From left are Dr. Holly, Bill Holly, Jennifer Owens Holly with children, Richmond Holly, Carolyn Bellue Holly, Dr. Jim Henderson, Dr. Connie Melder, Marie Cobb Bellue, Sam McMahan, Kandie Bellue Destefano, Carrie Holly McMahan and Dr. Vickie Gentry.

Neither had the opportunity to attend college which is why the scholarships are part of the Louisiana State and Northwestern First Generation Program. This means that the recipients of the scholarships will be the first of their family to attend college. Also, due to Mrs. Irene Holly's life-long support of the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home in Monroe, if a resident of the Children's Home qualifies for either scholarship, they will be given preference in its being awarded. Mrs. Bellue attended the ceremony and is proud of her daughter and of this acknowledgement of her service, through her daughter to the education community.

As Dr. Holly said, "We came to Northwestern as children and we left as young adults on our way to making

a contribution to our community and country. At Northwestern, we were mentored, encouraged and fashioned by our professors and friends." "Northwestern is where Carolyn and I met and fell in love," Dr. Holly said.

"We are so honored and so grateful for Dr. and Mrs. Holly's generosity of spirit that led them to establish this professorship and these scholarships in honor of Dr. Holly's wonderful wife and mother-in-law, and in memory of his beloved mother," said Dr. Chris Maggio, vice president for External Affairs and executive director of the Northwestern State University Foundation. "These gifts will enable two deserving students who are the first in their families to attend college to attain their educational goals and it will

enable a professor in our College of Education and Human Development to pursue goals to aid in the training of future educators."

Dr. Connie Melder, director of Field Experiences in NSU's Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development, is the first recipient of the Carolyn Bellue Holly Distinguished Professorship in Teaching and Learning. Student scholarships recipients will be announced after selections have been made.

Following the luncheon, Dr. and Mrs. Holly and their 1965 classmates participated in afternoon commencement exercises and were awarded their 50-year diplomas from Northwestern State.



Graduates of 1965 gathered for a luncheon on May 8.



‘If you want to change the world, try’

Veteran reporter addresses Class of 2015 with words of advice and insight

“Don’t be afraid and don’t limit yourself,” journalist Gary Fields told the Class of 2015 during spring commencement.

When Gary Fields returned to his alma mater a few weeks ago to address the spring graduating class of 2015, he mentioned a few things he wished he could say to his 22-year-old self.

“You are never going to not want to save the world.” “Embrace the part of yourself that is unusual; it’s what makes you you.” “Treat everybody the same way, whether you are talking with the homeless person at the bus stop or the president of the United States.”

A 1982 and 1984 graduate of Northwestern State, Fields is a special projects reporter for the Wall Street Journal who specializes in criminal justice and law enforcement in the Journal’s Washington, D.C., Bureau. A veteran journalist whose career has mostly been spent investigating the worst of human nature, Fields said that covering crime – the L.A. Riots, the Oklahoma City Bombing, hate crimes, homicides, inmate brutality and the recent Baltimore Riots – was seldom simple.

“I can’t really say there were high points because the things I was covering were so heavy,” he said. “What I really cared about were people and stories of people we don’t usually pay attention to, the impoverished, the have-nots.”

Fields resides in Maryland with his wife, Helen Fox Fields, and three daughters. He has been with the WSJ since 2000. Prior to that he worked for USA Today as a states desk editor, rewrite reporter and criminal justice reporter. In 1992, he was dropped into a burning Los Angeles to cover the riots and went to the heart of the violence where he interviewed founding gang members who considered the LAPD another street gang. He has hairy stories from covering the D.C. crime beat in the crack years when the city was setting crime records. He remembers his first homicide case. He got used to seeing guns. Through some of those experiences, he learned it wasn’t his place to judge.

“Nothing is as simple as we make it out to be,” he said, explaining that he often questioned what his life would have been like if he had been born with different parents in a different time and place. “What I’ve always avoided is judgment. I leave judgment to God.”

Fields graduated from Bolton High School in 1978 after his father retired from the military and the family settled in Alexandria. He was involved with the school paper, but intended to study engineering in college before discovering that his aptitude leaned more towards English and writing.

“It just seemed natural to me, so I asked ‘Can you making a living doing this?’”

During his student days at Northwestern State, he worked as a part-time sports writer for the Natchitoches Times before he was hired as sports editor; otherwise, he would probably have pursued teaching. He later ran the Shreveport Times’ Natchitoches Bureau.

“That was my finishing school,” he said remembering the variety of stories he covered – festivals, events, government and crime – for several rural parishes. “Those were the years I didn’t have a complete day off.”

“It was in Natchitoches when I realized the tremendous power and responsibility you had as a journalist. What you were doing mattered.”

Fields transferred to the Shreveport desk where he was put on the police beat. In 1990, he had a short stint with the Gannett News Service in Arlington, Virginia, before moving to the Washington (D.C.) Times as a police reporter and eventually to USA Today.

Fields has won numerous awards, most recently a White House Press Association Edgar A Poe Award and New York Press Club Award for a series on mental illness and crime. In 2013, he shared New York Black Journalist Association Award in Crime Reporting for a series, "Crime in America." He also shared the 2011 National Press Foundation "Feddie" Award for coverage of federal law and the unforeseen consequences of overcriminalization, as well as a New York Press Club Award for coverage of criminal justice issues. He has won a Thurgood Marshall Journalism Award, an Excellence in Criminal Justice reporting award and was honored for his longtime coverage of those affected by sentencing and criminal justice policies. He won the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Journalism, a Crystal Gavel Award from the New York Press Club, was among the reporters that helped the Journal win the Pulitzer Prize in breaking news for its coverage of the events of Sept. 11, 2001, and was named the national journalist of the year by the National Association of Black Journalists.

The honor that he would be most proud of is one that has eluded him, though he has been nominated several times: a journalism award from the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights, the ultimate social justice journalism award.

Fields has also ridden the wave of advancing technology during his career, from a time in which he hammered stories out on a typewriter to sharing news instantaneously via social media and viewing his work in online editions of the paper with photo albums, video and interactive graphics. Journalism is not dead, he said, but it is changing.

"It's not better or worse; it's just different," he said. "The fundamentals of journalism are still there: get both sides of the story, be accurate and don't editorialize. The platform and delivery mechanism have changed, but the theme of reporting should be to get and out see it. Don't try to do it from a telephone."

Fields' volunteer work ranges from professional to religious. He has helped edit policy papers and press releases for the National Minority Aid Council, the Association of State and Territorial Health Offices and the Association of Immunization Managers. He is actively involved with managing, budgeting and fund raising activities at Trinity Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church of St. Andrew in Washington, D.C. He also is a member of the Montgomery County Foster and Adoptive Parents Association and an immediate past member of the board for the Fund for Investigative Journalism.

After years of reporting on crime, he still remembers his first homicide case in 1990 but feels a need, whether covering Baltimore, D.C., Philadelphia or urban America, to focus on the impoverished. He annually examines his work and asks himself if it directly helped or improved someone's life.

"That's how I measure a good year. The measure of a human is not how far they've come from where they started, it's who they brought with them. You have to have brought some of these people up," he said. "I didn't burn out because somebody has to tell the story and go into the neighborhoods where we really don't go. We have that responsibility."

As an NSU student, Fields was very involved with campus life as a member of the Student Union Governing Board, Alpha Phi Alpha, Blue Key, Sigma Delta Chi and the Wesley Foundation. He was a resident assistant in his dormitory and a radio dispatcher for the campus police. His senior year, he was a runner-up for Mr. NSU. He is a member of NSU's Alumni Hall of Distinction, the Long Purple Line.



Dr. Paula Furr, head of the Department of Language and Communication, visited with Wall Street Journal reporter Gary Fields, a 1982 and 1984 graduate of Northwestern State.



Gary Fields, right, accepted the Nth Degree from NSU President Dr. Jim Henderson during spring commencement. Fields was introduced as commencement speaker by graduating senior Emily Frame, center, who served as the 2014-15 editor of The Current Sauce.

"Going to Northwestern was more than enough for me to get the right tools to do this," he said.

In his commencement address, he quoted passages from Psalm 23, "If" by Rudyard Kipling and "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley and advised the graduates to commit those to memory. At the conclusions of his speech, NSU President Dr. Jim Henderson presented Fields with the Nth Degree, a Northwestern State University honor that denotes meritorious service to mankind. The Nth Degree is presented to those whose professional responsibilities in making the world a better place are carried out to the Nth Degree.

"You represent everything good about Northwestern State University and are the epitome of what an alumnus of NSU can be," Henderson said.

"Don't be afraid. Don't limit yourself," Fields told the graduating class of 2015. Reflecting on what he would have told himself 33 years ago, he said "I'm just a guy from Alexandria who remembers how nervous I was when I was sitting where you are. Stay true to yourself. If you want to change the world, try. Strive to be the best version of yourself you can be. Don't be afraid to fail. People notice when you carry yourself with dignity and compassion. I would tell him to trust the instincts and intellect he developed on this campus."

"You got more than enough at NSU to meet the world's challenges head on. This place has given you all that you need."



Dr. Jim Henderson was invested as his alma mater's 18th president March 27.



Investiture marks new era for Northwestern State University

Dr. James Braswell Henderson was installed to the office of the President of Northwestern State University of Louisiana Friday during a day of ceremony, nostalgia and celebration. Henderson, his wife Tonia and their children were honored throughout the day by dignitaries, academic officials, political figures, prominent clergy, friends and representatives from other institutions as students, faculty, university staff and the community gathered for the formal ceremony, the first Northwestern State has hosted in 18 years.

The proceedings were steeped in tradition as a procession of Northwestern State faculty in full academic regalia, accompanied by the NSU Wind Symphony, began the investiture in A.A. Fredericks Auditorium, attended by students, staff, alumni and friends. Garrett Pierce, Student Government Association president; Faculty Senate President Dr. Massimo Bezoari, Joseph B. Stamey, president of the Alumni Association, and Natchitoches Mayor Lee Posey offered welcome.

In his Investiture address, Henderson acknowledged his family, his wife Tonia, daughter Reagan and sons Nicholas and Alexander, his mother, Dr. Martha Henderson, and the recent loss of his father, the late Clement Henderson Sr., who died March 9.

"This would have made him proud, and everything in my spiritual and religious being assures me that a part of him is with us today," he said.

Henderson dedicated the Investiture to the Northwestern State students.

"Let this program be an emphatic signal and message that Northwestern exists because of you: to serve you, inspire you, guide you, motivate you and help you in any way possible to reach your goals," Henderson said. "Northwestern has adopted a new slogan, after extensive discussions and interaction with students, faculty and other stakeholders, that captures our philosophy. It is this: at NSU, we are 'Dedicated to One Goal. Yours.' More than a slogan, that will be the beacon that guides us in serving students whether they are on campus or online, traditional or non-traditional, local or global. Northwestern will be committed to assisting students in meeting their goals in life, helping them become who they want to be."

Henderson said that hundreds of faculty, staff and students have been involved in the shaping of his vision for the university.

"Northwestern State University will become the nation's premier regional university through innovative, transformative student learning that prepares graduates for life and career success," he said.

Media executive Gregory Ashlock, a 1991 graduate of Northwestern State, was guest speaker. Ashlock is executive vice president of operations iHeartMedia USA and president of iHeartMedia Southern California. He spoke of the commitment required to effect positive change.

"Change is not by chance, it is by choice," he said. "It comes from remaining focused and committed and it is necessary for progress. You have to change to move forward."



Gregory Ashlock

Henderson, Ashlock said, represents change, progress and the augmentation of the accomplishments of those before him.

"The university we create is a product of our mind and the way to change it is to change our thinking," he said. "It's not easy but it's rewarding."

Dr. Sandra K. Woodley, president of the University of Louisiana System, of which NSU is a member, issued the presidential commission. Henderson was robed by Pierce with assistance from Woodley and Jimmy Long, a member of the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System, in regalia that is a gift to the president from the student body. The robes, in school colors of purple and white velvet, were designed by the Student Government Association and represent the mutual collaboration between the students and the administration.

Pierce expressed gratitude to the Presidential Search Committee for listening to student concerns and said Henderson

is a leader who has already taken steps to secure the future of Northwestern State. He reminded the assembly of Northwestern State's motto: *Educatio Adulescentis est Civitatis Salus*, which translates "The education of the youth is the salvation of the state."

"I would like to thank Dr. Henderson for reminding us all what makes our university the premier regional university of the south," Pierce said. "It is our loyal dedication to the educational experience of the individual, and how that experience fosters the prosperity of our exceptional university, our beautiful community, our state and the world at-large. On behalf of our students, thank you, for making our one goal yours."

Woodley and Long presented Henderson with the President's Chain, which bears the university seal and links engraved with the names of all Northwestern State presidents and the years they served. The chain was a gift to the president in from Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society to commemorate the university's 125th anniversary in 2009.

The Northwestern State Chamber Choir, singing from the auditorium balcony, performed an Investiture Anthem during the ceremony and the Northwestern State alma mater at the close, accompanied by the Wind Symphony.

The day began with an Investiture Mass of Thanksgiving at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Natchitoches, concelebrated by both the dioceses of Alexandria and Shreveport. The Northwestern State Chamber Choir was featured in vocal selections chosen especially for the Mass.

Following the campus ceremony, the Hendersons opened the Arnold R. Kilpatrick President's Residence for a community reception in which guests congratulated the new first family.

Henderson and his wife, the former Tonia Istre, are both graduates of Northwestern State. Henderson earned his un-

dergraduate degree in journalism at NSU in 1994, his master's in administration from the University of West Florida and a Doctor of Management from the University of Maryland-University College. Mrs. Henderson earned a degree in journalism at NSU in 1993.

Prior to his appointment at NSU, Henderson was chancellor at Bossier Parish Community College for five years, where he oversaw enrollment growth of more than 84 percent and increased annual certificate and degree completions by 90 percent.

Henderson was named Northwestern State president last September and took office on Jan. 1. He built an immediate

rapport with students through social media, personal accessibility and his presence at campus functions. Throughout the Investiture, students and others commented on the proceedings via Twitter postings @DrJBHenderson #newprez and on Facebook.

Friday's Investiture was well-re-

ceived by students who respond to Henderson's approachability.

"It was an awesome ceremony and I was glad to be part of it," said Sherry Lucas, a third-level nursing student from Natchitoches. "I wanted to be here to support Dr. Henderson. He has shown he cares about the students and will be a great president."

"The message in the Bible from Luke 12:48 is 'To whom much has been given, much will be expected.'" Henderson quoted in his address. "In allowing me to serve as president of Northwestern, you have bestowed upon me the enormous responsibility and privilege of guiding a school that we cherish. I will strive diligently every day to earn your trust and confidence as we realize an audacious vision worthy of this university and those we serve."



Deans, department heads, honored guests and dignitaries shared the stage with Dr. James Henderson as he addressed the faculty, staff, students and friends of Northwestern State University during the Investiture ceremony. Henderson's vision is to lead Northwestern State to becoming the premier southern regional university.



The Henderson family includes daughter Reagan, Jim and Tonia Henderson and sons Nicholas and Alexander.



President's Command Performance

A champagne toast opened the second annual President's Command Performance to honor inductees into Northwestern State University's School of Creative and Performing Arts Hall of Fame Dr. Grady Harper, Jim Bob Key and Dr. Jack Wann. Honorees were joined by family and friends for the gala that celebrates the arts through performances by NSU students and faculty.

President's Command Performance Gala draws well-wishers for Hall of Fame induction

Northwestern State University's Mrs. H.D. Dear Sr. and Alice E. Dear School of Creative and Performing Art honored three individuals who made significant contributions to the arts during a spring gala that capped a day of celebration at the university. Dr. Grady Harper, Jim Bob Key and Dr. Jack Wann were recognized for their work in promoting the arts through their work with NSU and in the community with induction into the School of Creative and Performing Arts Hall of Fame as Northwestern State hosted the second annual President's Command Performance in conjunction with Investiture ceremonies for newly appointed President Dr. Jim Henderson.

Individuals inducted into the CAPA Hall of Fame are recommended and chosen based on their lifetime achievements and contributions to the life of the Arts at NSU, Natchitoches, the region, the state, nationally and internationally.

"We are honored this year to induct three individuals who were instrumental in the growth and success of the Creative and Performing Arts over the years," said Dr. Greg Handel, director of the School of Creative and Performing Arts. "It takes hard work and dedication by both teachers and patrons to continue to elevate programs. These three individuals are stellar examples of what happens when people are dedicated. We are thrilled to have them as members of the Hall of Fame."

The second annual President's Command Performance featured the talents of student and faculty musicians, vocalists and dancers who performed throughout the evening.

The gala began with guests strolling down a purple carpet to the sounds of the NSU Jazz Orchestra as a capacity crowd enjoyed cocktails and dinner in the Alumni Plaza. The social hour included a silent auction and a retrospective art exhibit of paintings by Harper, "Grady Harper: Vision."

Guests later moved into the A.A. Fredericks Auditorium where the NSU Wind Symphony opened a program of performances that complimented the work of the three honored guests.

Harper, unable to attend, was featured in a video in which family members described his work and personal influence. A professor of art from 1969-1990, Harper enjoyed a long, successful and influential career as an educator and visual artist, popularly known for his watercolors of Natchitoches vignettes. His daughter Becky Harper Monroe represented the Harper family in thanking CAPA for the honor of her father's induction.

Theatre and dance students performed a medley of Broadway show tunes in commemoration of Dr. Jack Wann, former head of the Department of Theatre and Dance, who is credited with building the program into one of the top programs in the south. A member of the faculty from 1990-2003, Wann exposed a broader audience to theatre and dance by introducing the popular summer dinner theatre and the annual Christmas Gala to the Natchitoches community. He continues to lecture at annual workshops at NSU.

Key was instrumental in the creation of the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Orchestra and for 50 years has been a key member of the Symphony Society, which works

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Left: Becky Harper Monroe represented her father, Dr. Grady Harper, who was unable to attend his induction into the CAPA Hall of Fame. Center: Jim Bob Key spoke with warmth and humor of his memories of being involved with arts. Right: Former Creative Director Dr. Jack Wann spoke of the challenges he faced in building NSU's theatre program from the ground up. Dr. Greg Handel and Dr. Jeff Mathews were hosts for the evening.



A medley of Broadway show tunes during the President's Command Performance showcased the talents of Northwestern State University students in the Department of Theatre and Dance. Other performances featured musicians and vocalists in the NSU Wind Symphony, the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Orchestra, the NSU Men's Chorus and the NSU Jazz Orchestra.



Soprano D'Nissa Hester, accompanied by the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Orchestra, performed "Un bel Di" from Madame Butterfly during the President's Command Performance.

Gala continued from page 9

to create scholarships for music students. Key also served on the Council of the Metropolitan Opera, the Regional Boards of Shreveport Symphony and Shreveport Opera and the Louisiana State Arts Council, among other endeavors. In Key's honor, the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Or-

chestra performed a selection from "Madame Butterfly" and the finale to Franz Schubert's "Symphony No. 5 in B flat major."

The NSU Men's Chorus closed the program with a special request from Key, "When I Have Sung My Songs To You."

Spotlights

Charles Lindell (2014) was named chief executive officer of St. Bernard Hospital earlier this year. Lindell previously served as chief operating officer for the facility. He was the hospital's cardiopulmonary director before he was named COO.

Lindell previously worked in management roles for Lakeland Medical Center, Life Care Hospitals and Long Term Acute Care of Washington-St. Tammany Parish.

The St. James Parish Public System named **Rebecca Christopher Keller** (2005), a fourth grade teacher at Vacherie Elementary, District Elementary of the Year and a 2016 State Teacher of the Year semifinalist.



The Investiture of **Dr. Logan Hampton** (1988) took place March 22 in the Graves Auditorium and Chapel of the Chambers-McClure Academic Center. The Investiture included a formal processional of the Lane College Board of Trustees, distinguished guests, faculty, and staff, followed by a reception.

Hampton was named 10th president of Lane College by the Lane College Board of Trustees in June 2014.

Dr. Hampton has a doctorate in higher education from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Arkansas. He received his Master's degree in Student Personnel Services from Northwestern State University and his Bachelor's degree in Biology from Arkansas Tech University. He also is a graduate of the Harvard Institute of Management and Leadership in Education.

Prior to coming to Lane College, Dr. Hampton served in numerous student services capacities at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock. His last appointment at UALR was Vice Provost for Student Affairs. In this position, Dr. Hampton served as the Chief Student Affairs Officer and led the student development and student life programs, including judicial affairs, budgetary and administrative services. In addition to working as a higher education administrator, Dr. Hampton was a member of the Board of Trustees for Arkansas Baptist College. Prior to UALR, Hampton held positions at Texas A&M University, Texas Christian University and the University of Central Arkansas.

Kerry Lambert (2004) was choreographer for Prather Touring's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" presented at The Strand Theatre in Shreveport in March. Lambert earned a B.F.A. in musical theatre and dance and studies in composition and choreography with Pia Wyatt, associate professor of theatre and dance, and with Master Roberto Munoz and Melinda Roy with the Gulfshore Ballet. Lambert's choreography credits include "Oklahoma!," "Funny Girl," "Fiddler on the Roof," "Brigadoon," "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," "Miracle on 34th Street," "Urinet-

own," "Grease" and "South Pacific." He has choreographed for New Regency Films and is dance instructor at The Chicago New School of Dance and Theatre and earned choreography awards for Carolina Dance Masters. Kerry has performed in productions of "CATS," "A Chorus Line," "The King and I" and "Showboat."

Dr. Connie LeDoux Book (1989) will become provost and dean of The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina, in July, advancing from her position as associate provost of academic affairs and a member of the senior cabinet at Elon University.

The provost is a vice presidential position responsible for all matters pertaining to the academic functions of the college and is the second-ranking official at The Citadel. As the college's chief academic officer, the provost provides leadership in all academic areas, including curriculum and instruction, research and scholarly activity, accreditation, admissions and financial aid, and academic support services.

Book began at Elon University in 1999 as an assistant professor, eventually becoming a tenured professor, department chair, and associate dean, before advancing to her current roles there.

Book, who has a strong record for strategic planning and execution, currently provides leadership for 12 areas of Elon University including the undergraduate and graduate curriculum, general and experiential education, faculty and staff leadership and professional development, and strategic integration of a residential campus. Her portfolio of responsibilities touches more than 6,000 students and 700 faculty members.

Book holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from Louisiana State University, a master's degree in education from Northwestern State University and a Ph.D. in journalism from the University of Georgia.

She has served as a board member for the Agency for Public Television in North Carolina since 2008 and is also a member of the board for the North Carolina Open Government Coalition.

Dr. Jonathan Bush (1996), chair and professor in the Department of English and interim associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Western Michigan University, was named American Council on Education Fellow for the 2015-16 academic year. He was one of 47 emerging college and university leaders selected by ACE this year. Fellows are nominated by their presidents and selected following a rigorous application process. The ACE Fellows Program strengthens institutions in higher education by identifying and preparing promising senior faculty and administrators for responsible positions in college and university administration.



Connie LeDoux Book

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The program, in which participants work with executives at colleges other than those that employ them, is known as a stepping stone to top positions in higher education.

The program combines retreats, interactive learning opportunities, visits to campuses and other higher education-related organizations, and placement at another higher education institution to condense years of on-the-job experience and skills development into a single year.

During the placement, fellows observe and work with the president and other senior officers at their host institution, attend decision-making meetings and focus on issues of interest. Fellows also conduct projects of pressing concern for their home institution and seek to implement their findings upon completion of the fellowship year. At the conclusion of the fellowship year, fellows return to their home institution with new knowledge and skills that contribute to capacity-building efforts.

Bush joined the WMU faculty in 2001 and has served as department chair since 2011. He also is director of the Third Coast Writing Project and coordinator of WMU's developmental writing program. He is co-author of two books on teaching English at the high school and middle school levels and he has published widely in English education and composition studies. He currently serves on the College Board's Advanced Placement English Language and Composition Development Committee. He is also a public affairs officer in the Navy Reserve.

He earned a bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University, a master's degree from Northwestern State University of Louisiana and a doctoral degree from Purdue University.

Jessica McGrath is returning to the Natchitoches community as director of Natchitoches Parish Library, effective June 1. McGrath earned a degree in education at NSU in 2005. She was previously the outreach coordinator at the Arkansas State Library. A native of Mansfield, she began her library career at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas, while working on her M.L.S. at Texas Women's University. After completing her degree, she and her husband moved to Arkansas where she worked as the young adult librarian and eventually the head of adult services at the Saline County Library.

After their oldest daughter was born, the McGraths had the opportunity to move to Louisiana where Jessica was able to continue working with the public at both the DeSoto Parish and Red River Parish libraries. Their return to the Arkansas was prompted by her husband's desire to begin work as a hospital chaplain. Jessica joined the State Library staff as

a reference librarian but quickly moved to the newly created outreach position.

Jessica and her husband Mike have two daughters.

A jazz band under the direction of **Patrick Bordelon** (2000) performed at the National School Board Convention in April. The ensemble was one of two groups in the country chosen to perform. The National Association of Music Merchants picked the performers and produced a national commercial for music advocacy that can be seen at [youtube.com/watch?v=APLYgIVpBJ4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APLYgIVpBJ4). Bordelon and his students are featured prominently in the commercial.

Bordelon is director of jazz studies with the Central Community School System in Baton Rouge.



Malcom René (1992)

was named president/CEO of Houston Metropolitan Federal Credit Union effective June 1. René previously served as executive vice president/chief financial officer at United Community Credit Union where he managed all strategic activities of the credit union includ-

ing lending, investments, accounting, marketing, business development and human resources.

René serves in many credit union associations in the community: including the Cornerstone Credit Union Association International Relations and Communications Committees, the Corporate American Corporate Credit Union National Users Committee, and the Fiserv Galaxy Data Processing System National Users Committee. Additionally, René serves as the Chairman of Public Relations, Media and Advertising Coop. of the Houston Chapter of Credit Unions.

He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major emphasis in finance from Northwestern State and is a graduate of the Southwest CUNA Management School at Texas Christian University.

Scott Wattingly (2010) was named head football coach at Archbishop Hannah High School in Covington. A New Orleans native, Coach Wattingly earned a degree in liberal arts and played on the defensive line from 2005-2009. He is currently pursuing a graduate degree in teaching.

Need to update your contact information?

Go to northwesternalumni.com/update.

You can also update by calling the Alumni Center at (318) 357-4414.

Kappa Sigma *will hold 50-year reunion*



Plans are underway
for the **50th Reunion** of the
Theta Mu Chapter of Kappa Sigma Fraternity
to be held Friday-Sunday, April 8-10, 2016,
in Natchitoches.

All alumni members of the chapter
from 1966 to the present will be included
in all mailings that will begin mid June.

If you have concerns regarding your contact information
or want to update your information,
contact Kelly Kay in the Office of Alumni Affairs
at (318) 357.4248 or at kayk@nsula.edu.

COEHD seeking nominations for educator awards

Northwestern State University's Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Alumni Advisory Board is seeking nominations for the Hall of Distinguished Educators for 2015. Nominees must have graduated from Northwestern State's College of Education at least 30 years prior to nomination. Inductees will be honored during a brunch and induction ceremony at the Teacher Education Center during Homecoming festivities.

This year, the College is introducing a new honor, the Distinguished Young Professional in Education. This award will recognize an outstanding young professional who has made contributions in Pre-K through higher education or to the profession of education through teaching, research or community service. Nominees must be 40 years old or younger, have at least 10 years of meritorious service to education and gained prominence in some areas of teaching, administrative achievement, contributions to research, leadership in professional associations, contributions to professional literature and outstanding community service. Nominees should be of high moral character who contributions have most fully expressed the spirit of service the award represents.

The deadline to submit nominations is July 13. The selection will be July 20.

To nominate an individual for these awards, send the nominee's resume and other documentation outlining the reason for the nomination to NSU Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development, c/o Janet Broadway, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, LA 71497.

Additional information is available by calling Broadway at (318) 357-6278 or e-mailing broadwayj@nsula.edu.

Pi Kappa Phi brothers earn Extra Mile Scholarships



Six members of the Beta Omicron chapter were awarded \$2,500 in scholarships at the 8th annual David D. Morgan Extra Mile Scholarship Banquet April 24. Recipients are, from left, Austin Craft, Zack Cockerham, Sean Austin, Manton Capers, Michael Dailey and William Devall (not pictured). The award places emphasis on excellence in academic, campus involvement, leadership, service and employment is paying off for Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity students at Northwestern State University. Earlier this year, the success of the Extra Mile scholarship at NSU went nationwide. Funded by a million-dollar endowed gift from Morgan, the scholarship is now available to more than 10,000 Pi Kapp students at over 180 campuses across the country.

Read the full story in the online Lagniappe section of this magazine.

Couple honors family with endowed nursing scholarship

A Tyler, Texas, couple honored family members by establishing an endowed scholarship at Northwestern State University to benefit nursing students. The fund was established in memory of Philip Richards and in honor of Kathy Richards Thomas.

The \$1,000 Phillip and Kathy Richards Endowed Nursing Scholarship will be presented to a student seeking a bachelor's degree in nursing who maintains a 3.0 grade point average.

Donors Pat and David Sistrunk are originally from Shreveport, but retired to Tyler. David Sistrunk and brother-in-law Phillip Richards are graduates of Northwestern State. Kathy Thomas and Pat Sistrunk both attended Northwestern State, but graduated from other universities. A native of Jonesboro, Kathy was a professor at the NSU's Shreveport Nursing Campus. Her son's family are residents of Zachary. The Sistrunks strongly support giving back to their community and education.

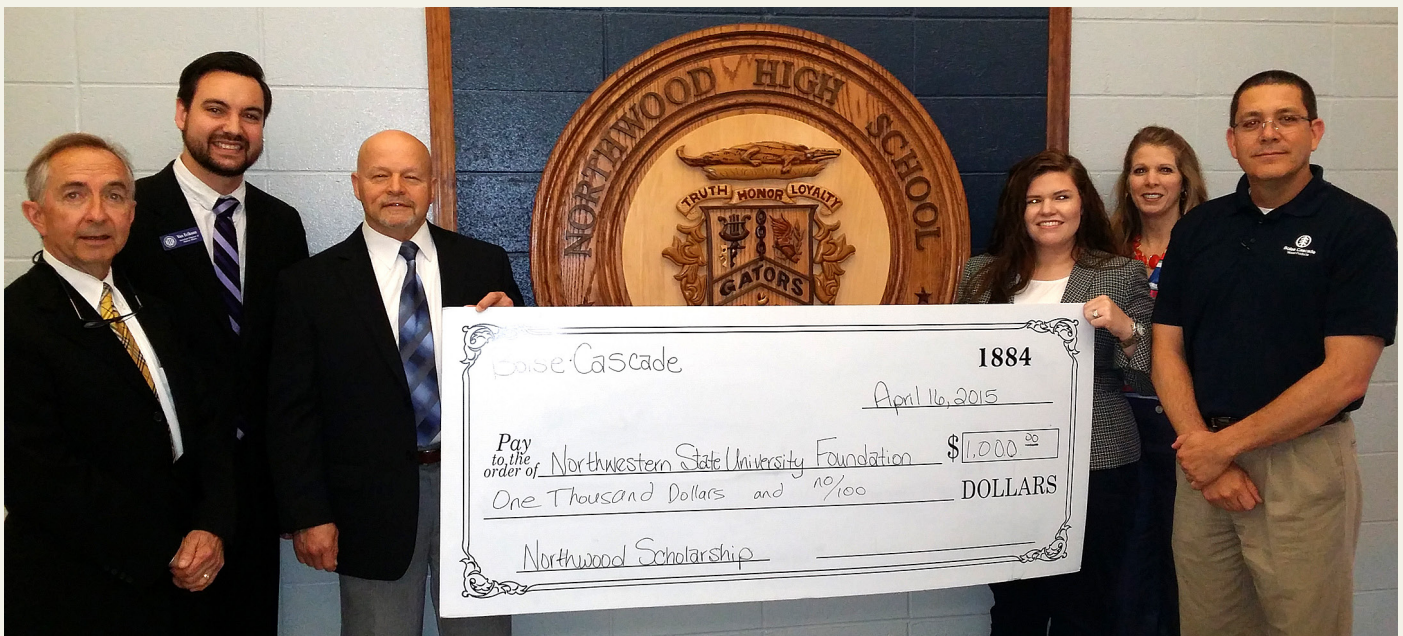
"When a student chooses to pursue an education, they give themselves the power to change their life," the Sistrunks said in a statement. "We want our legacy to be that of helping those who come behind us."

The first Phillip and Kathy Richards Nursing Scholarship will be awarded this fall.



Pat and David Sistrunk of Tyler, Texas, honored family members by establishing a scholarship at Northwestern State University to benefit nursing students. From left are Mr. and Mrs. Sistrunk with Jill Bankston, associate director of development.

Boise Cascade scholarship will help ET students



Boise Cascade in Lena initiated a Manufacturing/Engineering Technology scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 for a student from Northwood High School in Lena to attend Northwestern State University and major in Engineering Technology. Boise Cascade is a manufacturer of plywood, engineered wood products, lumber and particleboard and supplies a broad line of wood products and building materials. Support for engineering technology scholarships aligns with Northwestern State's initiatives in developing a skilled workforce to contribute to the manufacturing sector in Louisiana. From left are Wayne Denley, vice president of Knowledge Platforms for the Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance; Van Erikson, NSU's associate director of Alumni Affairs; Nason "Tony" Authement, superintendent of schools for Rapides Parish; Lori Sepulvado, human resource coordinator; Jill Summers, assistant principal at Northwood High School, and Glen Lang, Boise Cascade's Lena plant manager.



Six trailblazers in the history of intercollegiate sports in Louisiana reunited to commemorate receiving the first full athletic scholarships for women in the state's history. Their memories and reflections captivated an overflow crowd filling the Atmos Energy gallery at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum on April 16 to commemorate the anniversary, 40 years to the day, of the historic event at NSU. From left are Diane Pittman McCain, Lisa Brewer, Pat Nolen Pierson, Louise "Do" Bonin, Mona Davidson Martin and Emma Ellerman Boozman. Northwestern was among a very small group of institutions across the south to move aggressively and create opportunities for women's athletics in the wake of the implementation of Title IX, the federal law preventing sex discrimination in education. It made sense for NSU to take the lead. Women had competed for Northwestern against out-of-state colleges since 1963. In 1967, NSU was the first state university to host a summer instructional basketball camp for girls in junior high and high school. President Dr. Arnold Kilpatrick and vice president Loneta Graves were the driving forces behind the creation of 10-12 scholarships awarded to 13 young women to play sports for NSU on April 16, 1975. Along with the roundtable discussion, remarks by President Henderson, Lady Demon basketball coach Brooke Stoehr and assistant athletics director Haley Blount, a 10-minute short film entitled "40 For 40" was debuted at the event. The video can be viewed at vimeo.com/nsula.

2015 DEMON FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

SEP 3	SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA*	6PM
SEP 12	UL Lafayette	6PM
SEP 19	Mississippi State	TBA
SEP 26	CENTRAL ARKANSAS*	6PM
OCT 3	Incarnate Word*	6PM
OCT 10	OPEN	
OCT 17	LAMAR* (HOMECOMING)	6PM

OCT 24	McNeese*	TBA
OCT 31	Nicholls*	3PM
NOV 7	ABILENE CHRISTIAN*	6PM
NOV 14	Sam Houston State*	TBA
NOV 21	STEPHEN F. AUSTIN*	3PM
* Southland Conference games		
HOME GAMES		



D.C. Greer: Healthy living has this athlete sprinting towards the gold in this summer's Senior Olympics

"Your degree of success is directly relative to your degree of preparation and implementation in every area of life," said D.C. Greer, a senior athlete who qualified for the 2015 National Senior Olympics, to be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota in this July.

"I have competed in events such as the 50 meter, 100 meter, 200 meter and 400 meter events and have won gold medals in the 400 meter, silver in the 200 meter and bronze in the 50 meter," he said. "I never competed in high school or college."

Competing in the Senior Olympic Games is one of his bucket list items, but more importantly, he believes his story will encourage others to live healthy as they age. Ten years ago, at age 55, Greer was diagnosed with Type II diabetes. When he asked his doctor what he could do to reduce the number of shots and pills he was taking, he was told to lose weight, exercise and follow a healthy diet. As part of his lifestyle change, he got involved with the Mississippi Senior Olympics and began training for sprint competitions.

Getting in shape was a challenge. He had to learn proper warm-up and training techniques and adjust the foods he ate. In the process, he lost 43 pounds and only takes a couple of pills now.

Greer, who lives in Brookhaven, Mississippi, graduated from Northwestern State in 1974 with a general studies degree. He has worked in the public finance market for more than 30 years with the last 20 as vice president of Government Capital Corporation. He and his wife Maria have three sons, three daughters-in-law and four grandsons. His other interests include family time, volunteering at church, enjoying the outdoors, deer and turkey hunting and college sports.

"Winning in anything demands a degree of commitment and competing in the Senior Games - from age 50 'til death do us part - is even more of a commitment. It's also a challenge because body parts just don't work as well as they used to," he said. "I am proud of winning the medals and the recognition especially over the last three to four years. However, the real benefits are experienced daily, both mental



and physical, as a result of regular exercise and healthy eating. It's kind of like going to church and rejoicing in worship on Sunday. But it's the daily strength and encouragement through God's Word that keeps us spiritually healthy, focused and prepared to face the challenges in life."

Greer said there are many health factors that come into play when considering an exercise program as adults grow older.

"My message to others is not whether you should compete on any level but to have a regular exercise program within your abilities, eat sensibly and participate in an exercise group. It's fun, encouraging and generates a sense of accountability."

John Wayne Odom Football Scholarship honors local standout



The John Wayne Odom Football Scholarship supporting Northwestern State Athletics was established by family and friends of one of the Demons' all-time great performers, who later became a legendary football coach at St. Mary's High School in Natchitoches and Claiborne Academy in his hometown of Homer. Shown at a reception commemorating the scholarship's creation are NSU assistant director of athletics Haley Blount; Carol Ann and Lewis Odom, John Wayne's sister-in-law and brother; and NSU director of athletics Greg Burke, standing next to a photo of John Wayne as a Demon player from 1960-63.

Read the full story in the online Lagniappe section of this magazine.

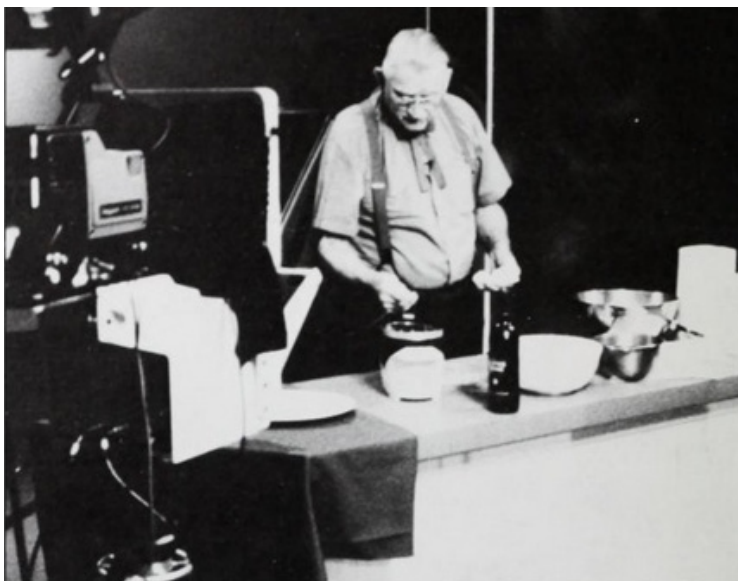
Looking Back

In 1995, Northwestern State introduced a new program to prepare students to prepare graduates for the tourism industry. As part of an academic reorganization, Northwestern created the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences and established the Hospitality Management and Tourism degree as a separate program from home economics. The new degree was to prepare students for employment in the food service, lodging, commercial recreation and travel-related business. Areas of emphasis were recreation administration, travel and tourism and hospitality services. The program launched with 24 students enrolled.

"I think it's a major for the 21st century," said Pat Pierson, department coordinator. "It's a program a lot of students can grab on to and it's a fun curriculum."

Graduates would go on to work for hotels, restaurants, hospitality services, airlines, travel agencies, visitor bureaus, historic sites, parks, museums and related fields.

Pierson said the degree program was added because of increased awareness of travel and tourism in the U.S. and in the Natchitoches area in particular.



Justin Wilson cooks in a promotional video for the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.



Planning to visit Natchitoches?

If you are planning a visit to campus, be sure to visit **natchitoches.com** to help plan your itinerary. There are always activities, events, exhibits and attractions that appeal to visitors that take place year-round in Natchitoches and Cane River Country.

Guess Who



The 1970 Potpourri declared that audiences that you saw some of the best plays ever produced at Northwestern, including a run of Woody Allen's "Don't Drink the Water." Can you name the cast members pictured here? The first five correct answers will win a prize. If you know the answer, call the NSU Publications Office at (318) 357-4553 or e-mail jacksonl@nsula.edu.

The social work student pictured in the Spring edition of Guess Who was Eliza Brittain Behrendsen. Those who guessed correctly were:

John G. Williams, Natchitoches
 Marcia Bolton (1988), Natchitoches
 Cecilia Thomas, Natchitoches
 Allen Evans (1989), Shreveport
 Shay Risinger Ball (1994), Natchitoches

Others who guessed correctly were:

Jane Hall, Natchitoches
 Elizabeth Dalton (1973), Natchitoches
 Patrick Hollier (2000), Natchitoches
 Elizabeth Knecht (2006), Natchitoches
 Judith Covington (1985), Shreveport
 Laura Mayeaux (2007), Natchitoches
 Patricia Pratt Franks (2001), Natchitoches
 J. Craig Poleman (1985), Shreveport
 Leah Coleman Lentz (1995, 1999), Natchitoches
 Brenda Smith Sowell (1982), Robeline
 Becky Ham (1970), Natchitoches
 Dawn Hearn Anderson (1987), Baton Rouge
 Lisa L. Himes, (1992), Pineville
 Cynthia Dennis (1991), Bastrop, Texas
 Nina Porter Thibodaux (1994), Natchitoches
 Kimberly Oas (1977), Solon, Ohio
 Laurie Coco Moreau (1994), Port Allen
 Michelle Fuller-Harris (1992), Gonzales
 Susan Maggio Ewing (1977), Montgomery, Texas
 Mike McHale (1990), Lake Charles
 Marc Misuraca (1991), McKinney, Texas



In Memory

1947 – Mary Woodard Gregory, Aug. 24, 2014, Pleasant Hill

1947 – Ralph Irel McFarland, Capt. U.S. Navy/Ret. - Sept 21, 2014, Washington, North Carolina

1951 – Jefferson T. Hennessey, March 24, 2015, Lafayette

1952 – Ronald C. Martin, March 31, 2015, Natchitoches

1955 – George A. Oubre, Feb. 5, 2015, Gonzales

1955 – Murrell "Coach" Walker, April 11, 2015, Dry Prong

1957 – Don Durr, April 18, 2015, Shreveport

1957 – William "Little Bud" McConnell, March 30, 2015, Marshall, Texas

1958 – Earl Brooks, April 17, 2015, Jena

1958 – Max Huff, Oct. 14, 2014, Ferriday

1959, 1961 – Berlin "Moe" Book, March 11, 2015, Natchitoches

1963 – Richard D. "Dickie" Mason, March 13, 2015, Mesquite, Texas

1968 – Charles Rex Scott, April 22, 2015, Shreveport

1969, 1972 – Richard "Dick" Martin, April 3, 2015, Bogalusa

1972 – David Lee Rambin, April 13, 2015, Galveston, Texas

1973 – James Wayne Frazier, March 29, 2015, Zwolle

1987 – Gary Faust, Feb. 17, 2015, Austin, Texas

Mary Paige Johnson, Feb. 11, 2015, Shreveport

Boaz Barber Squyres, Feb. 16, 2015, Natchitoches

Elizabeth Turpin Reese, March 10, 2015, Blanchard

Marcellas Ross – April 19, 2015, Glenmora

Alumni Columns magazine is online with an extended version including the **Lagniappe** section where more snippets, alumni spotlights, and additional photos can be found. View the full magazine with the online section at northwesternalumni.com/alumnicolumns.



Members of the Class of 1965 gathered for the Golden Jubilee May 8. On the front row from left are Joel Nell Griffin, Patsy Gaspard Falkenberry, Linda Gauthier Amberg, Jacque McLemore Crew, Robert Crew, Evelyn Watkins White, Joyce Kinman Bartlett, Sanford Hames Di Mola, Arleen Rolling Thomas, Linda Malley Bissell Elizabeth Marsden Tower and Janet Malone Gibbons. On the second row are Elizabeth Namie, Sandra David Hughes, Rita Rodgers, Georgia Blair Beasley, Sue Chance Gardner, Elizabeth Grigsby Reimer, Judith Hickman Dean, Glenda Turner Salter, Tommye Ensminger Price, Benni Johnson Fambrough and Phyllis DeRosia McIntosh. On the third row are Patsy Arnold Boudreaux, Mary Beth Williamson Corrigan, Joanne Salter Frank, Melinda Watkins Miller, Jim Alfred Bowen, Roger Lockridge, Carrie Elizabeth Crenshaw, Sarah Walker Pilcher and Donna Jabara. On the fourth row are Brenda S. Anderson, Don Book, Donald Beasley, H. Arthur Dew, Ronald C. Alexander, Jesse McWilliams, Carolyn Bellue Holly, Paul M. Riggs, Charlie Weber and John James Moore. On the fifth row are Elaine Gunby, Nancy Clayton Reding, Gene Maddox, F.M. Jones, Jimmy Berry, Joe Taylor, James Larry Holly, Jeff Austin and Billy O. Grisham. On the sixth row are John Lewis, Ben Pratt, Randall J. Webb, Fred McDowell, Carolyn Brown Roy, Jim Lay, Fred C. Fulton, John Leggett, Lady W. Patton and Lee Dickson.

Campus News

Morgan's Extra Mile scholarship goes national



The Pi Kappa Phi Foundation announced the launch of its newest initiative, the David D. Morgan Extra Mile National Scholars Program, last fall. Funded through an endowed gift by Morgan, a 1973 Northwestern State graduate and entrepreneur in the insurance industry, to the Pi Kappa Phi Foundation under the auspices of its Common Loyalty Campaign, this new initiative seeks to encourage, motivate and ultimately recognize students who go the extra mile during their undergraduate career by effectively balancing their academic and extra-curricular activities while working either part or full time.

Placing an emphasis on excellence in academic, campus involvement, leadership, service and employment is paying off for Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity students at Northwestern State University. Six members of the Beta Omicron chapter were awarded \$2,500 in scholarships at the 8th annual David D. Morgan Extra Mile Scholarship Banquet April 24. Junior Sean Austin of DeRidder, senior Austin Craft of DeRidder, junior Manton Capers of Wortham, Texas; freshman Michael Dailey of West Monroe, junior Zack Cockerham of Morgan City, and freshman William Devall of Denham Springs were recognized as exceptional leaders at the event, held at Merci Beaucoup Restaurant in the Natchitoches Historic District.

The Morgan Extra Mile Scholarship Program is funded by and named for Beta Omicron chapter alumnus David D. Morgan. An entrepreneur, an insurance executive and a leader within his industry and his fraternity, Morgan has spent a considerable portion of his life helping others to be successful. Instilling the lessons he learned growing up in Louisiana – lessons of hard work, industriousness, and self-determination – into the heart of this initiative, the Pi Kappa Phi Foundation created the scholarship program in 2008. In the time since, the program has furthered the academic pursuits of more than 40 NSU students in awards exceeding \$40,000. Earlier this year, the success of the Extra Mile scholarship at NSU went nationwide. Funded by a million-dollar endowed gift from Morgan, the scholarship is now available to more than 10,000 Pi Kapp students at over 180 campuses across the country.

Recipients are selected through a rigorous application process that awards points for campus and chapter leadership, grades, employment, and a series of essay questions. This program seeks to recognize the effort and seriousness that a student displays in pursuit of academic excellence. But just as important as a student's scholastic prowess, however,

is their commitment to applying themselves in the classroom and in life outside of the classroom by going the "extra mile."

Pi Kappa Phi's leadership programs like the Extra Mile have provided uncommon opportunities for members like senior Austin Craft, who found his own definition of success as a student leader. "Success isn't always a measurable standard. It's whatever we believe it is." An important learning lesson for Craft came during his time as the chapter treasurer. "It's never the perfect time to do something, but we must push through any obstacles and accomplish what we set out to do."

Underscoring the purpose and mission of the program, friend of the Fraternity and NSU Dean of Students Frances Conine delivered the keynote address. Conine arrived at NSU in 1981, first serving as Coordinator of the College Success Program, then Educational Coordinator of NSU's Central Louisiana programs, Director of Counseling and Career Services, Director of Student Services and Judicial Affairs, and Executive Director of Student Development and Student Conduct. She has been a faculty member in the College of Education and Human Development since 1996 and was named Dean of Students in 2013. She is a licensed professional counselor, marriage and family counselor and certified mediator. Conine has been a member of the Pi Kappa Phi "family" her entire life. Her father, the late John C. Watkins was the archon of the Omicron chapter at the University of Alabama in the 1940s. She was named honorary house mother for the Beta Omicron chapter at NSU in the mid 2000s.

Beta Omicron Chapter Advisor Doug Ireland and Alumni Chapter president Lane Luckie presented the scholarships on behalf of Morgan. Dozens of student members, alumni, parents, and representatives from Northwestern State University were in attendance for the catered dinner.

Athletic scholarship honors John Wayne Odom

The far-reaching impact of one of Northwestern State's greatest football standouts, John Wayne Odom, has resonated through the years and has recently been commemorated by the creation of the John Wayne Odom Football Scholarship for NSU Athletics.



Odom was a four-year letterman at tackle from 1960-63 who went on to play for the Houston Oilers in the American Football League before it merged with the NFL. An All-Gulf States Conference performer, he was selected in 2007 for the Top 100 Demon Football Players of All-Time roster chosen as part of the Demons' football centennial year.

He became the head football coach at St. Mary's High School in Natchitoches and turned a fledgling program into a Louisiana prep powerhouse, highlighted by an undefeated 1977 state championship team and an amazing 90 consecutive district victories, along with 10 district championships.

Odom left SMHS in 1982 with a 100-24-2 record and also a 1981 state track and field team championship.

His brother and sister-in-law, Lewis and Carol Ann Odom, recently established an endowed athletic scholarship in his memory.

They donated \$10,000 and an additional \$1,100 was donated by former teammates and friends at a recent reception held to commemorate the scholarship endowment's creation. Additional donations are welcomed to the Odom Football Scholarship through the Demons Unlimited Foundation.

"Sincerest gratitude is extended to Lewis and Carol Ann Odom for this generous contribution in honor of former Demon great John Wayne Odom, who also touched so many lives as a successful high school football coach," said NSU director of athletics Greg Burke. "Scholarship endowments provide immediate athletic and academic opportunities for deserving student-athletes while also further securing the foundation of the NSU athletic program."

After briefly leaving coaching, Odom became head coach at Claiborne Academy near Homer, his hometown. He guided a struggling, undermanned team to three state finals appearances, including a 1987 state championship, and finished his career with an overall 157-52-2 record.

Odom, who helped the Demons win back-to-back GSC championships as a player under coach Jack Clayton, was a 2000 inductee in the Graduate N Club Hall of Fame at NSU, the school's highest athletic honor.

He was a member of the fabled Homer Iron Men team of 1957, a group of 18 boys who captured the state's imagination by bucking the odds in an 11-2-1 season. Twelve of the "Iron Men" received college scholarships, including Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame defensive tackle Fred Miller.

The Odom Scholarship is the 57th endowed scholarship for NSU Athletics and enhances a fund for athletic scholarships that exceeds \$1.5 million.

About 250 of NSU's nearly 400 student-athletes benefit from some level of scholarship support, said Burke.

The Northwestern State athletic program excels competitively in 14 NCAA Division I sports while the student-athletes achieve at a high level academically and learn life lessons through thousands of hours of community service.

Assistant athletic director Haley Blount, who along with NSU Foundation staff member Jill Bankston was involved in helping establish the scholarship endowment, had a personal tie to Odom through another scholarship that she received as an NSU competitor.

"When I was a student-athlete at NSU, I was named the recipient of the Walter Ledet Scholarship -- who by the way, coached John Wayne Odom in college. As that recipient, I had the opportunity to meet and have dinner with Walter and his wife Betty at the NSU Academic Awards Banquet, and we established a friendship that lasted until his death," she said. "I will never forget the impact that the Ledets and my scholarship had on my life."

"Contributors to this new scholarship endowment and their family members, while paying tribute to John Wayne Odom, will make that same impact on a countless number of student-athletes for decades to come," said Blount.

Admirers of Odom and other NSU supporters are invited to visit the www.nsudemons.com/odom link online to learn more about the scholarship and to contribute to it.

Nth Degree goes to track and field star Frank Trammel



Frank Trammel, one of the greatest athletes in Northwestern State track and field history, was presented an “Nth Degree” by NSU President Dr. Jim Henderson during the Demons’ Feb. 9 home basketball game in front of 3,612 fans at Prather Coliseum. Trammel, a two-time All-America distance runner who still holds the NSU school record in the 10,000 meter run 40 years later, was recently named the national boys high school cross country coach of the year by the National Federation of State High School Associations Coaches Association. Trammel, who has bachelor’s and master’s degrees from NSU, coaches at Benton High School. His teams in track and field and cross country have won 17 state championships and 35 district titles. Several of his NSU teammates attended the halftime ceremony honoring Trammel, including another standout runner, Leo Gatson, who drove in from Odessa, Texas to support his friend and teammate. NSU athletics director Greg Burke, Trammel, Gatson and Dr. Henderson posed for a photo after the on-court recognition.